Q: Do you want to say anything more about your feelings about life in Washington?

A: No we'll get to that. I'll tell you. I was somewhat shaken when I realized I was heading for Morocco when they were just in the throes of all the investigations by the Congress into the complaints of waste and inefficiency.

Q: What was behind your getting selected to go to Morocco?

A: By then I was pretty experienced. I administered quite a few cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts. I might add with interest that I never had a claim settled by the board of review for claims in the Chief's office. I always managed somehow or other to stop them from reaching that stage and discussed them and cleared them up and solved them without going there, which I'm proud of. But it could mean that I must have been too easy. I don't know; I don't think so.

I had one [claim] while I was in the Mobile District; Jim Woodruff [Reservoir]. I don't remember what it was about, but I do know that I sent it on up through channels, and it hit the Chief's office. [Manning E.] Manny Seltzer, the chief of the legal division, called me, and said, "Weary, what in the hell are you doing sending a claim in here?" Well, I told him I couldn't get it worked out because my people told me I couldn't do some of the things I wanted to do. He asked what I wanted to do, and he said, "Damn right, you can do that. If I send it back to you, will you solve it?" And I said, "Yes, sir," so he sent it back to me, and we solved it.

Q: Your own legal staff had told you that you couldn't do it?

A: Yes, and I didn't want to overrule them if they gave me their advice.

I was concerned about going into Morocco. In essence it was like coming from a pleasant country club experience and going out into the desert in a windstorm, if you know what I mean.

But promptly on arrival in Casablanca I was confronted by a problem which took up all my time for about a week. I landed in Morocco after there had been a team from the Chief of Engineers' office there for nearly a week. If I remember rightly, it consisted of Johnny Hardin,[99] who was the assistant chief of engineers for military construction, and a team of experts, plus a board of pavement consultants, who were all high-level people--Porter, from Porter & Urquhart; a man from out of Texas A&M: Bob Philippe from the Chief's office--and the Division's key pavement engineering expert, a man named Christensen, was also a member of this team. But they had been running around looking at everything and uncovering all the mistakes, lifting up all the corners, and here I arrive.

If I remember correctly, I got in there on a Friday and the first thing Saturday morning I drove to Sidi Slimane to join this group.[100] They had now reached that particular airfield. So I come in, I knew some of them, but everybody there knew more than I did; everybody. And everybody had their own solutions. I stayed with them all that day. When we finished there and went back to Casablanca late Saturday, I stayed in a little family hotel, and I hoped fervently that this big team of experts was going to spend Sunday relaxing on the beaches. I had a key and went over to the Division office and spent that Sunday alone, just trying to read into things, to find out. Sunday night finally I went to bed intending Monday to go back and start again.

Sometime in the morning, maybe four o'clock, a man shook me and woke me up in my hotel room. I had never seen him before, and he said, "You don't know me, but you're going to have to take me on trust, I'm your G-2 and I have certain missions to do over here. You'll find out about them ultimately, but among other things I'm going to try and alert you to something. Your group of consultants, driving back from Sidi Slimane late Saturday night, ran over and killed a U.S. airman. The U.S. Air Police have discovered this and have traced it and found the car, and these are your top-level people. I don't know what you're going to do about it, but you better be aware of it."

I didn't know what to do. But I spent that whole week trying to keep these people out of the hands of either the Air Police or the French police. I met with them, and I found out what had happened very quickly. The man that was driving the car was the Chief of Engineers' top man in this board. They were all tired and sleepy, and the driver was the only one awake. At some point, a few miles from Sidi Slimane, they all felt a little bump that woke some of them up. That's all they knew. I ultimately found out, and the Arab police found this out, of course, that this airman had been drunk, that he had wandered out on the public highway, that he'd been hit and killed by a prior car, and all our car had done was go over his dead body, but this was not known at this stage. As I say, I didn't particularly want these pros turned over to the Air Force at that moment, and I didn't want them turned over to the French.

Our solution was to work with the U.S. consul, and I had a lot of help and a lot of people working. At any rate we succeeded in getting the consular court to take it over and talked the French into letting the consular court have jurisdiction; talked the Air Force into not doing any more about it than that. In about a week, we got permission from the consul to ship these experts home, and boy, I shipped them out of there. But this is the way I got into that Division, and instead of having that week and the opportunity to really talk with Johnny Hardin and the others from the Chief's office and find out the technical thoughts and so on, I spent my first week, literally, keeping these guys from getting lynched or railroaded or put in jail or something. So that didn't make life too easy.

In mid-April General Sturgis had assigned me as Mediterranean Division Engineer in Morocco. En route, when I was in Washington, he and his key staff had planted in my mind the "seed of conversion," the idea of changing the current cost-plus-fixed-fee contract into some form of lump-sum and unit-price contract. General Sturgis told me, as I remember it, that if I found it to be advantageous, to then plan to return promptly to Washington in June and present my ideas and backup and financial requirements and whatever we couldin

order to see whether we should present this to higher authority and try for authority to do it.

One of my first moves on arrival in Morocco, after the first few days, was to ask one of my Mediterranean staff to present me in a couple of weeks [with] a study presenting the pros and cons and recommending the proper course of action for such a conversion. Lieutenant Colonel Curtis Chapman headed the team that studied it.101

In a couple of weeks the study was presented strongly recommending no change in the contract form. I thanked them and told them I thought they had done an outstanding job and said I was going to be gone for several weeks to visit Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, and the Libyan portion of the Division, and would they please prepare just as thorough a study emphasizing the positive thoughts toward conversion. I wanted to really see if there could be anything there.

Q: Were you leaning toward making a change?

A: Well, the more I thought about it the more I couldn't see any other way to get a handle on the problem. Now, if it were clear that all the experts and technicians working for me were telling me that it shouldn't happen, then I wasn't going to force it. They had come up with a well-thought-out analysis, showing pretty conclusively that you had better not try and change it. That's when I said, "Okay, I'm heading for Tripoli and Turkey and Dhahran and Eritrea, and it will take two or three weeks. When I come back, I'd appreciate a study as thorough as this but looking at more positive aspects of doing it, seeing if there isn't some way we can make it work as a tool to get out of the problems we are in."

When I returned to Casablanca, the study showed potential for and benefits in conversion. Additionally, the Division had used the extra time to refine their funding picture. So with the approval of General Sturgis, Colonel Chapman and I took the study to OCE in June with a request for additional funding to carry out the then-authorized program. After about ten days of thorough review in OCE, at Secretary of the Army level, with Air

Force, JAG [Judge Advocate General], and G-4 attendance in the meetings and with DOD blessing, my party and I received the authorization for additional money, legal and contractual advice, and approval in principle from the Chief of Engineers to proceed and attempt to negotiate a fixed-price and unit-price contract to complete all line items under way and price out supplies and equipment expected to be surplus to these line items with a conversion date of midnight, 31 July 1953.

I was given permission to accompany my family back to Casablanca by transport, and arrived about the second or third of July. [See appendix B for Dr. Richard Farrell's interview with General and Mrs. Wilson.] I was met at the gangplank by a delegation including my deputy, Colonel Swede Carlson, and Chapman, who had flown back.102 And they said, "We have bad news for you. We need ten more million." I don't know that I have that written down any place, but they said it. And I said, "Who else knows it but you?" And they said, "Nobody." And I said, "Well, nobody's going to know it right now. Just keep it to yourselves. We're going to straighten this out, and we're going to chase it down, and we're going to get credit for materials and items that are here but that we can't locate right now. We're going to find them. Let's not raise the issue now."

Q: Not too much is usually said about the other projects or activities of the Division outside of Morocco. Could you say something about what was going on in Tripoli, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Eritrea? What kind of things. were you doing there?

A. In addition to the District in Morocco, which was the East Atlantic District, the Division supervised the Middle East District, with headquarters in Tripoli, and TUSEG, which was the Turkish-U.S. Engineer Group, in Turkey. Now starting in TUSEG, that had been going on, off and on, for some little time and going from one supervision to another. But since the Mediterranean Division was formed, it had been under the auspices of the Mediterranean Division. It involved half a dozen airfields in Turkey; some radar sites. It was kind of like a little District. It wasn't exactly a District. It had grown up under different auspices, but it was there and it was effective.

By the time I took over the Division, a man named Jakitis was the District Engineer. They had one big field down near where Saul of Tarsus came from. It was very effectively made use of at the time of the Lebanon exercise. It was the airfield in south Turkey that logistically supported the operation into Lebanon. It was interesting to me because Saul of Tarsus has always been one of the people I was interested in in the Bible. Paul--and his little town of Tarsus -- was probably 15 or 20 miles away from this airfield. They covered a good share of Turkey. It was involved in NATO desires and things aimed at listening and so on in Russia.

Q: And the Corps built the facilities?

A: They were built under contract, a CPFF contract again. The Corps was supervising it.

Q: Did they handle maintenance too?

A: No it was turned over to the Turks. If they had any real problem we would probably get back and help them. But it was a joint agreement.

Now, going back to the Middle East District. The headquarters of that was in Tripoli, and Paul Troxler was the District Engineer when I first got there.103 He was experienced out in that part of the world. In Dhahran, in Saudi Arabia, we had the Dhahran airfield, which was being enlarged and maintained constantly at the time I was there. It was a key airfield on the route to India. We always had something that had to be done there. We had three water systems: salt water, well water, and drinking water. It was a helluva project, and it was interesting to go there because occasionally I was able to see the Saudi Arabian court. They visited Dhahran once a year, and ARAMCO [the Arabian--American Oil Company] would send 30 or 40 families home on leave so they could take their houses and turn them over to the princes. Even today, looking at the landing of President Carter at Riyadh the other day, I saw the Oriental rugs on the sand. Well, I've seen 20 or 30 rugs there at Dhahran, beautiful things.

They were getting ready for some big shot to come in once when I was down there, and I went to the

little terminal which we had built and sat up on the counter to stay out of the way. The bodyguards came in with curved knives and guns slung across their backs and cartridge belts over their shoulders, and their faces scarred from fighting with the knives. They were slaves and once you took on a slave he became your responsibility. You had to feed his family and so on. They came in and looked the terminal over, inspected all the people, and spread these rugs over the floor. It was an interesting situation.

Alcohol is not legal in Saudi Arabia. Fortunately, I don't drink anything except a little wine or beer, and I don't do that unless there's an occasion or a party and others are drinking. So this ban did not bother me much. But the people over there who wanted something else really had a hard time. And our contractors had a hard time keeping their skilled labor satisfied without running into difficulty with Saudi police or officials.

Once, while I was in Dhahran, I was told that two of our contractor's workmen had just been put in the jug for importing liquor into Saudi Arabia. It wasn't that they were stupid enough to bring liquor into the country. But they sometimes flew to Bahrain Island, where the ground rules were less demanding, to spend a pleasant weekend. These two workmen were returning from Bahrain, and when they got off the plane one of them showed signs of having had too much to drink. He did a little arguing and shoving and pushing, and the other one tried to calm him down and get him out of there but didn't succeed. So the Saudi police picked them both up and charged them with importing liquor, and it was inside their tummies! I wanted to know what we could do and was told we could ignore them or go to the jail and take them blankets and food and try and work on the government and see if we couldn't ship them home. That was the only thing, so about three days later we shipped them home.

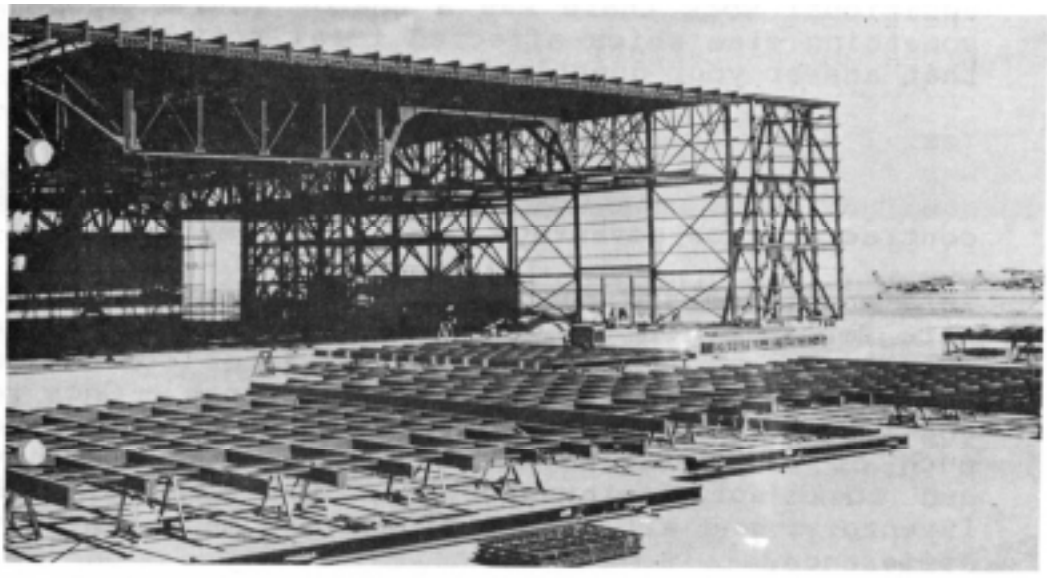
It was interesting. It's much different now, I can tell by looking in the paper and on the TV, tremendously different. There were a few wives over there, none of ours except our resident engineer, who was authorized to bring his wife over

there on a two-year tour. They didn't dare let the wives drive because if they were in an accident they were automatically at fault. Any American involved in an accident was at fault, and they didn't much want their wives in jail. It was a tough place to build, terrific temperatures. Usually in those days you took off before daylight in order to take advantage of the cool air in getting the plane off the ground.

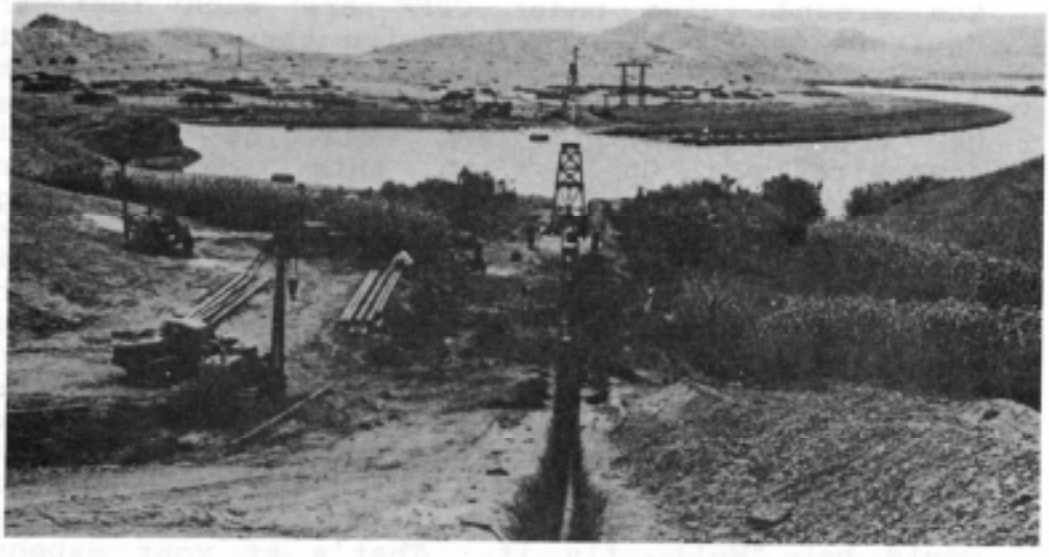
We went from there over to Asmara, Eritrea, which is on a 7,000-foot elevation plateau right above the Red Sea. It was a communication facility for the Army, and it was an ideal place for it. It had uninterrupted connections with pretty near every place in the world because of this altitude and the lack of higher elevations in the area. It was a summer climate at 7,000 feet, so it was ideal. It was a large, extensive facility, and the U.S. was always adding to it the whole time I was in the Mediterranean Division, and long after when I went back as deputy or Chief I found they were still adding to it. I think it is now no longer ours, probably progress has made it possible to let it go, I don't know. In Tripoli there was a major airfield, Wheelis, for the U.S. Air Forces, and that's where the Middle East District office was located. That's basically the two Districts that we had. What would you like to talk about now?

Q: I wanted to ask you about Boulhaut Airfield, where $5 million was saved.[104] Do you want to say anything about how that was accomplished? Was it because of the change in the form of contracting?

A: If you're talking about as a result of conversion, that would probably be it. In essence the ultimate costs for that originally converted work approximated the estimate that the Division had prepared in the beginning, but we couldn't have done that without giving the contractor confidence that if he went ahead and let people go and really cut back he was still going to make enough money to come out whole. Again, we couldn't have done it if the savings hadn't been plowed back into the job to give more work on which the contractor could earn an honest dollar of profit. But I'm not going to try and get into the numbers game, I can't remember, and again, every time we negotiated



Hangar Construction at Ben Guerir.



Portion of a Pipeline Linking Ben Guerir and Under Construction, 1953.

Concrete Block Plant, Dhahran Airfield, Saudi Arabia.

additional work there was a change in the scope or something- else which affected total cost. Now does that answer your question?

Q: Yes, I think so, because you said that you think it was the change in contract administration, and this was the first major conversion, and you and the contractor took advantage of all the improvements.

A: It's a little hard for you to understand, but there were something on the order of 4,000 Americans that came home in the first six weeks after conversion, and they averaged well over $500 a month. Once you got off the CPFF and eliminated the necessity for much of the detailed recordkeeping, and guarding, and bookkeeping, inventorying, and adjusting the inventory, and all that business, it made a helluva difference.

Now why did they do it before conversion? Because the ground rules under CPFF are such that the contracting officer must require the contractor to do it. And when we changed to lump sum with different requirements, the contractor just figured he would guard it as well as he could economically. On a job this scattered and extensive he would expect a little pilferage anyway. Again, the real secret is that if he needed another widget that he couldn't find in his stock, he could fly it over and pay through the nose for that one trip, but that was a lot cheaper than keeping 20 of those widgets overseas and counting them, patting them, and maintaining them all the time in order to be sure never to be short one. But as a contracting officer, if they had come to me and said, "We have to fly an engine for a Caterpillar tractor out here now," the answer would be, "Well, fly it. That's at your expense because you should have foreseen that and shipped the engine in time to get it here by routine methods." And you can't help it, that's just the way it is.

At the last minute before conversion we were using a lot of people to inventory. You realize that we had to convert from a CPFF to a lump sum at midnight on the 31st of July with supplies in the warehouse that were earmarked for that job, with progress on the job having to be estimated; what

percent complete it was. It was almost impossible to be accurate, almost impossible. The biggest thing the contractor had to satisfy himself was that he had enough in the warehouses, plus a jillion more, that would cover him for the next six or eight months so that he wouldn't run out of too many items required in the specific line items being constructed. Again, there was a matter of confidence. We and the contractor got together pretty well. And he and I agreed that you're not a crook and I'm not a crook, and you want to make this job smell good, and I want to make this job smell good, now let's get with it. So in essence I told him that in my opinion I was going to accept initial conversion prices higher than I believed he would be justified in keeping in the long haul, and he was going to think it was less than he ought to get. But I was convinced that he was going to have enough to get by on, and I was expecting him to return what he could because we could plow it into additional line items. We would take it away anyhow in the renegotiation era if it was excessive. It worked. The morale got better. It made all the difference in the world. The work goes smoother and you save time. What else do you want to explore?

Q: Well, would you care to go into some aspects of the relationship with the Air Force, some of the problems you encountered. In your interview with Dr. Farrell [See appendix C] you said that the Air Force commander tended to go to the Pentagon and back to the Chief's office with his complaints instead of through you.

A: Yes, that's a fact.

Q: But was it a question of the Air Force wanting to have more control over the construction related to their program?

A. Yes, they wanted to get rid of us.

Q: Didn't you have that same kind of problem in China and Burma when the Air Force was still part of the Army?

A: Yes, that's right. As I mentioned, the Air Force Installation Representative (AFIR), the Air Force

officer that was directly connected with us to speak for the Air Force, not for the command primarily but for the whole Air Force, was a pretty good man. Ultimately he went from Morocco out to Colorado Springs to be the resident man directly in charge of construction of the Air Force Academy.

As I said, Colonel Barnett was a pretty good man, and he tried to play fair. He didn't try to find things that we could get tripped on. He tried to keep us from getting tripped. But aside from his staff, who were pretty good people, he was about the only Air Force type that gave this impression. And I realized that Barnett was considered in many Air Force circles as being too sympathetic to the Corps of Engineers. But I don't think there's any particular reason to complain any more about the Air Force than I have done elsewhere.

Q: What about the Corps' relations with the foreign governments involved?

A: We had fairly good relations with the French, under the circumstances. But you must remember, we were in their country, their rules applied, and in our minds all of their rules included a lot of red tape--certifying and checking and so on-well, like we'd be apt to do if somebody else came here and occupied the middle of Alabama and was trying to build something.! It's a natural reaction. There was a language difficulty, which was natural. Not only that, you had two languages. You had French and you had Arabic, which you had to work in.

Q: Did you have interpreters of your own?

A: We sure did. But on one occasion, I was visiting a radar site out in the boondocks. We were there, and we were trying to discuss it, and the contractor was actually a Moroccan. And the French were there, and it ended up with the Moroccan talking in Arabic to the Frenchman, and he'd talk in French to me, and I'd talk English to my people, and my French is not that good. But we managed--pointing to things on the drawing and using fingers and hands, we got by. But that's not quick. We found them arbitrary sometimes. In all of your real estate dealings, you definitely had to work through them, and you had to get their

approval for a lot of things, and it was hard not to feel that they were a delaying factor. But on the other hand, when you looked at it from their point of view, they were doing a good job of trying to get things done without destroying what they thought was their country's best interests.

We had problems with money and customs. In Dhahran, long after I left Morocco and was in the Chief's office as deputy chief, we finished up one aspect of the work on the airfield at Dhahran and tried to demobilize and send everybody home, and the Saudis kept a hostage. There was a captain who was assistant area engineer. They kept him and said they wouldn't let him leave until we had paid customs duties on the things that we had imported into Saudi Arabia to install in the structures the U.S. was giving them. After months had passed, the young man's mother became sick. He received an urgent request to come home, and the Saudis let him leave. I immediately put out instructions from the Chief's office never to let him back in Saudi Arabia.

We had some of the same kinds of problems in Morocco. We had a provo marshal, the Air Force had air police, the French had their police. And you had high livers, on a construction job like that you had people making big money. They weren't supposed to have scrip. Only government employees and the military were supposed to have scrip. The contractors' employees were supposed to be paid in francs in Morocco or dollars in a bank in the U.S. We had one occasion when my provo marshal broke up a card game and seized $5,000 or $6,000 worth of scrip as evidence. It was being used at a poker game where contractors' people were playing as well as people authorized scrip. So he impounded the scrip. Shortly thereafter the theater froze the old scrip and replaced it with a new issue. This was done every so often to combat black marketeering. The provo told me that this would keep him from having to try the guy because the money we were holding as evidence wouldn't be any good in a couple of days anyway. I had to make him turn the money in, certify it, put some other "in hold" until the trial could take place.

There were a lot of things like that. We had some undercover people too. We knew that the French had agents, and they were watching us all the time. You couldn't very well try to pull anything, which is just as well anyway. It was to our advantage to establish good relations. There isn't any point to fighting people if you can do it the other way. So we went out of our way to assure that they understood and sympathized and tried to help us accomplish what we needed. I'd say these aspects were similar to what I had tried to accomplish out in India in World War II. To get the job done you need a friendly family feeling in the place. What else would you like to ask?

Q: I think as far as Mediterranean Division is concerned, that's all.

A: Oh, let's see. There were a lot more things on disposing of surpluses. We made a strong effort to dispose of surpluses. There was a tremendous stockpile of lumber. It was pretty well sold, not at profit but not distress figures exactly. A lot of the equipment brought back money to the project. It was just moving it from one Air Force pocket to another but it gave our Moroccan project a better appearance.

The Navy was starting to build in Spain for the Air Force, and they couldn't get equipment to build with so they finally in desperation came to us. We reinstituted or expanded the repair facilities of Atlas and let the Navy representatives pick out the particular pieces they wanted to acquire and stand there and tell us which parts they wanted replaced and all the rest of it. We rebuilt it for them. We got reimbursed for the cost of the rebuilding, and then we got a credit towards the project for what we shipped to them. I was careful to follow that because there was a good chance for us to stub our toes with the Navy if we sent them stuff that wasn't properly rebuilt. I went up there and called on them a few times and checked with them later and checked with the Washington level, and they assured me that the equipment they got from us in Morocco for use in Spain was by far the best they acquired, other than directly from the manufacturer. So that was one thing.

There were a lot of camp facilities for the contractor. You had generators, and kitchens, and things like that, and we ultimately turned those into line item facilities, either as they were or took the equipment out and refurbished it and put it back into the process, thereby recovering it. We recovered or put to permanent project use close to $15 million worth that we couldn't account for shortly after I got to Morocco at the time of conversion. And within two years we had wiped that out. We had found, properly used, and taken credit for, or sold, shipped, and whatever--rebuilt the $15 million that we couldn't account for in 1953--and were back on an even keel. So all that got distributed into the savings of a place like Boulhaut, too.

Q: That must have pleased the congressional investigators.

A: Oh, by that time they weren't too concerned. Yes, it pleased a lot of people including us. It should have pleased them, and I'm sure it did. But I do not remember Congress taking any note of the achievement. They had made their points in 1952-1953 and considered their work completed.

Q: You have pointed out elsewhere that you didn't think the Corps got good coverage.

A: Oh, yes, that's right. I don't think they did, and they may not want it now, I don't know.

All right, now we worked with JCA [the Joint Construction Agency] in Paris. One thing we did, we transferred TUSEG to them while I was still Division Engineer. It's transferred a few times since then, too.

Q: Now why was that?

A: Well, you got NATO more directly involved out there, and MED Division was off to the flank. Then when the MED Division moved up into Italy, it became more closely related again. Of course, we subsequently added work in Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan to MED Division, too, while I was deputy chief. The big program in Saudi Arabia now is being financed with their own money. It is a

remarkable program, building for the Saudis with their own money, that started back 10 or 15 years ago in the TV business. We had a big program to put in TV facilities over there with their money, which is a sign at least that they must think you are trying to do the right thing. Okay, are you ready to leave that part of the world?

Q: And move you back to Washington.

A: No I go to Fort Leonard Wood first. In the summer of' '55, I was ordered to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to take command of the 18th Engineer Brigade, which is a troop unit. This was good for me. It was ten years since World War II, and I had hardly been near a soldier. But I also began to ask myself: Do I know what units are like these days? Do I know what the organization is like? Can I identify the insignia? As a company commander in the 3d Engineers, my new battalion commander had arrived after having been on District duty from World War II until 1939. And he had to get me aside and say, "What are these different insignia?" I thought, boy, that's never going to happen to me, and here suddenly it was!

So I asked the Chief's office for permission to come back through Europe and England and visit some of the Engineer units and see what they were doing and get a better concept of things so I could do a better job when I 'got to Leonard Wood. And again, that's kind of intellectual curiosity, but it was in my direct interest. So I was allowed to take my family. We flew from Morocco to Germany. They went sightseeing while I traveled in Germany and visited different construction units and talked with staff engineers. Then we took the boat train from Holland to England and visited some of the Engineer units with the Air Force who *were* building fields around England. We spent about three weeks in England traveling in and out of London and then headed for home on the United States, reporting to Fort Leonard Wood in August 1955.

Fort Leonard Wood was a chance to get back into the military side. It was a very unsettled business. The units weren't too well filled, and they weren't in top shape either. The war in Korea was over and the pressures were off. So I was able to work into it again fairly easily.

Q: How different did you find the troops when you finally got back to them?

A: Oh there wasn't as much difference as you might think. But there was new equipment in their hands, and they could do some things better. There was some difference in organization that I had noted on my trip home. The troops were better educated. The last time I had really been with troops, except in World War II, was back in the 3d Engineers. In those days you had a few high school graduates but not many. We had considerably more in this draft Army, which was fine, but also it meant you had to be careful to see to it you kept them busy and interested so they didn't go off half-cocked. Leonard Wood was not heaven but as far as I was concerned it was an ideal place to train Engineer construction troops.

Q: Why was that?

A: Because you could go out and build a road around the border of the reservation. And you had gravel pits, and water, and a lot of terrain, things that were needed and would be useful in training. While I was there they had one of these Louisiana maneuvers, and I learned about race problems.

I had a battalion that had been working up in Wisconsin during the summer at Camp McCoy. They had done a very good job. And they came back, stayed about three weeks or so, and then took off for the maneuver area down in Louisiana. But I didn't keep a close enough tab on things because after they were on the way down there by train, I checked and found that their fillers had come in, and they were about 50 percent black now headed for Louisiana. And I thought oh, oh, so I immediately sent word ahead to look out. And I gave instructions to my personnel people to ship them an overabundance of white replacements at the first chance and get the ratio down to about a third. I thought you could live with it without too much trouble with about a third. Well, before we could get more fillers to Louisiana, there was some trouble.

Q. What kind of trouble?

A: Oh with the troops. They would get into too many fights and fracases. No murders or anything like that, but not what you would want to have.

Q: Was there a problem of interaction with the local people?

A: I don't know that there was any because I wasn't down there. I don't know for sure.

Q: Then your fears were mainly internal?

A: Well, yes, plus the civilian. You get too large a proportion and you get gang effects. It has gotten better since then but still, 15 percent is a good number. You can do that and get along pretty darn well, but you go up to 30 and you're getting close to the trouble area. You get up to 50 or more and it's just like integrating a school. You can handle 15 percent with no problem, but you get up to 75 percent and bingo it goes to 90 in a hurry! Of course, it's too bad but it's a fact of life.'

At Fort Leonard Wood, I renewed many experiences and I took part in a map maneuver exercise up in the Fifth Army in the Chicago area, so that I felt more confidence again on the military side. But I only stayed about eight months when I suddenly was ordered to the Chief's office as assistant chief of engineers for military construction.

Q: Was this a sudden development, a vacancy or something? Didn't you expect to be at Leonard Wood longer?

A: Oh, I expected to be at Leonard Wood a couple of years. But I replaced Dave Tulley.[105] I wanted to stay but I'm sure my family were [sic] happy to move. Well, I'll put it this way, from the Chief's office viewpoint, with Dave Tulley moving on for some reason--I don't remember the reason--I would think I was the logical one to bring in with Morocco still going on and military construction, and I sure was experienced in that side.[106] It would be a logical move, I can understand it. As a matter of fact, I got purified in that eight months as far as not being near troops, so that was accomplished at any rate. I was the deputy post commander, incidentally. Now, again I'm back to